UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.17/1996/10/Corr.1
17 April 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
Fourth session
18 April-3 May 1996

Demographic dynamics and sustainability

Report of the Secretary-General

Corrigendum

Paragraph 7

For gender equity read gender equality and equity

96-09679 (E) 170496 180496

UNITED NATIONS **E**

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.17/1996/10/Add.1
8 March 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
Fourth session
18 April-3 May 1996

Demographic dynamics and sustainability

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Page
INTRODUCTION	1 - 5	2
I. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS	6 - 9	3
II. REVIEW OF PROGRESS	10 - 36	4
A. Country experiences	10 - 25	4
B. Major groups and non-governmental organizations	26 - 36	7
III. FINANCE	37 - 42	9
IV. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	43 - 58	10
V. CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR ACTION	59 - 60	13

96-05820 (E) 140396 220396

INTRODUCTION

1. The present document reports on progress in the implementation of the aims set out in chapter 5 of Agenda 21 (Demographic dynamics and sustainability) 1/ and presents a set of recommendations for action. The report was prepared by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) as task manager for chapter 5 of Agenda 21, in consultation with the United Nations Secretariat, in accordance with arrangements agreed to by the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development at its fourth session. It is the result of consultations and information exchanges between designated focal points in United Nations agencies, governmental officials and a number of other institutions and individuals.

2. The Secretary-General's report on chapter 5, prepared for the Commission on Sustainable Development at its third session (E/CN.17/1995/15), described some salient features of the global and regional demographic landscape and noted the increase in general awareness of the links between the environment and rapid world population growth and other demographic trends.

3. The growing attention paid by the international community to those links was reflected in a number of important international conferences held since the early 1970s, including the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992 and the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994. Chapter 5 of Agenda 21 and chapter III of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (Interrelationships between population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development), although belonging to different documents, composed by conferences held more than two years apart, together formed "the most compelling and comprehensive account so far of what needs to be done about the interface between population, environment and sustainable development. The two ... refer to and reinforce each other." 2/

4. Two more recent international conferences have discussed related issues. At the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995) the discussion on poverty was in a sense a continuation - only much more extensive and thorough - of the discussion on poverty at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. At the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 8-15 September 1995) the status and advancement of women were debated along lines foreshadowed by the International Conference on Population and Development but, again, in a much more comprehensive and detailed fashion. The closely related nature of these issues and themes ensures that observations pertaining to chapter 5 of Agenda 21 and chapter III of the Programme of Action will also weigh on many of the issues discussed in Copenhagen and Beijing.

5. The present report furnishes information on certain factors that have been shown to have had significant impact on demographic variables and on population and sustainable development policies in general, with a focus on actions taken by Governments in support of population policies and programmes and, in particular, in support of gender issues. It also contains information on activities and measures taken by non-governmental organizations and members of

the United Nations system as follow-up to chapter 5 of Agenda 21 and chapter III of the Programme of Action.

I. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

6. The currently accepted view among most experts is "that levels of population, of consumption patterns and the nature of technology are the three major factors which determine the effects of development on the environment". 3/ Among Governments this view is prevalent as well, as can be seen in the recommendations and action programmes of recent international conferences. For example, in chapter 5 of Agenda 21 it is stated that the "growth of world population and production combined with unsustainable consumption patterns places increasingly severe stress on the life-supporting capacities of our planet". 4/

7. A variation on the same theme is also found in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. "Efforts to slow down population growth, to reduce poverty, to achieve economic progress, to improve environmental protection, and to reduce unsustainable consumption and production patterns are mutually reinforcing." 5/ In addition, recognizing that "the ultimate goal is the improvement of the quality of life of present and future generations, the objective is to facilitate the demographic transition as soon as possible in countries where there is an imbalance between demographic rates and social, economic and environmental goals, while fully respecting human rights. This process will contribute to the stabilization of the world population, and, together with changes in unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, to sustainable development and economic growth." 6/

8. The difference that the commitment of Governments can make to the success of population (and other) policies is widely recognized in conference documents and is confirmed by research. Agenda 21 is, in its entirety, predicated on and dependent for its success on the direct and committed involvement of the public sector. The Programme of Action notes that "experience has ... shown, in instances where the leadership is strongly committed ..., countries have been able to mobilize sustained commitment at all levels to make population and development programmes and projects successful". 7/ Confirming the results of many previous investigations, a recently published study concluded, inter alia, that, in regard to family planning policies and fertility decline, governmental policies and programmes can make a major difference. 8/

9. Similar words may be used about the importance of gender equity and equality. In a very significant step forward which brought together and further developed sections of chapters 5 and 24 of Agenda 21, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development stressed the importance of gender relations. As no previous international document of its kind had done, it recognized the influence of the status of women and girls on factors important to the demographic transition and to the achievement of sustainable development. "The empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of their political, social, economic and health status is a highly important end in itself. In addition, it is essential for the achievement of sustainable development .... [Improving] the status of women also enhances

their decision-making capacity at all levels in all spheres of life, especially in the area of sexuality and reproduction. This, in turn, is essential for the long-term success of population programmes." 9/

II. REVIEW OF PROGRESS

A. Country experiences

10. Some 120 field offices, covering more than 130 countries, received questionnaires from the UNFPA Task Force on ICPD Implementation. The Task Force sent the queries as part of its monitoring activities. To date, 78 replies have been received. The replies provided much valuable information, even though they were not amendable to statistical or quantitative analysis.

11. Judging from the replies, in by far most of the responding countries, the Programme of Action was widely publicized, and a variety of communication channels were used to disseminate the main results, whether the principal media outlets were under public or private stewardship. The population issue evidently enjoyed a prominence in public awareness that it had rarely, if ever, attained before.

12. The general tendency is to attach greater importance to population questions. This process has been, of course, in train for some time, but it received a great boost by UNCED in general and the International Conference on Population and Development in particular. The documents from both conferences strongly emphasized the need to integrate population factors into environment and development planning, a need which is ever more widely understood and acted on. One result is that a number of countries have introduced institutional changes by establishing new sections, directorates or departments dealing with population questions.

13. Several countries have resurrected dormant plans for a population policy. Others have initiated new ones. Many countries have started new programmes or sought to rejuvenate or redefine old ones in line with the recommendations of the Programme of Action. A major task for most countries is to put into effect the concept of reproductive health as defined in the Programme of Action. In most cases this means in particular to integrate the traditional Maternal and Child Health/Family Planning (MCH/FP) approach into the new and more comprehensive Reproductive Health/Family Planning (RH/FP) approach.

14. In the majority of developing countries from which information was received, only some components of the full range of reproductive health services are available. Not surprisingly the most widely available are those that formed part of the MCH/FP approach, such as family-planning counselling, information and services for pre- and post-natal care and safe delivery. The switch from one to the other approach is clearly challenging.

15. At the national level, efforts directed at improving the quality of care reflected national commitment. Uneven availability and access to services is a feature of the situation in most countries, and the need to remedy this situation is widely recognized. There is increasing recognition that it is

important to provide choice of methods. Most of the countries are working along similar lines to improve the quality of reproductive health. These can be summarized as follows:

(a) Developing human resources, including training medical and paramedical staff in reproductive health;

(b) Improving infrastructure;

(c) Developing medical protocols for RH/FP services;

(d) Increasing the availability of reproductive health services.

16. While the overall commitment of countries is growing, attention to particular sectors of the population field falls short of being sufficient in a large number of countries. Activities aimed at adolescents are in their infancy in most countries, and even in many of those with programmes of long standing, more efforts are needed. Nevertheless, the International Conference on Population and Development clearly triggered new efforts aimed at meeting the needs and problems of adolescents in the field of sexual and reproductive health. Nearly two thirds of the countries from which information was received reported having undertaken initiatives and put the needs in this area of activity on the political agenda.

17. Attempts to involve males in reproductive health and family planning programmes are also relatively recent and consequently have a long way to go. Again, the International Conference was a significant spur. Nearly half of the countries in the survey reported having started specifically male-directed involvement in reproductive health programmes. A variety of approaches are used, many of which are innovative and novel in the national contexts concerned.

18. Most activities involved in population policies or reproductive health and family planning services are devised for females. Yet traditionally females have had limited influence on the design and implementation of those activities. The call by the International Conference for gender equity and equality in this and other areas of social, economic and political life have brought to the surface in many countries attitudes and policies that previously had not received much attention. In most countries a process of accommodation is going on between traditional values and mores and the intentions of the recommendations from international conferences like the International Conference on Population and Development. The gender issue has been on the agenda in many countries for a considerable time, and progress has been and is being made. In others the issue has arrived on the public agenda more recently, and the accommodation process is proceeding more slowly.

19. The participation of women differs considerably among countries. About half of the countries reported having women in decision-making positions in the health-care system. Gender concerns are also increasingly being brought into programme design and implementation. Training in gender issues is becoming a standard component of many projects. It must, however, also be said that the information received indicates that the health sector is among the more

vulnerable ones in economically difficult periods and that female employment tends to suffer the most when the health sector is under economic strain.

20. For the objectives of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the International Conference on Population and Development to be reached, there must be, among relevant groups of people, a minimum receptiveness to the intentions behind them. Unless it is already there, the receptiveness can only be created through the provision of information and education. Information, education and communication activities (IEC) are therefore at the root of every successful population programme.

21. The information provided by the field offices indicates that much work remains to be done in the area of advocacy and IEC. Although IEC activities of one sort or another are undertaken in almost all countries, only about a third of the countries from which information was received can be said to have a full-fledged IEC strategy. Even in those countries, IEC activities were mostly linked with service delivery only. Thus the challenge in most countries is to develop a national IEC strategy for reproductive health, and more than half the countries in the survey are in fact engaged in developing such a strategy.

22. In general, progress is being made in most countries in the field of population. Judged by the number of activities initiated or adapted during the past couple of years, the majority of countries now place greater emphasis on population policies. That more rapid progress is not made must be attributed to a range of obstacles, which can be divided into three different groups.

23. Sociocultural factors and the contrast between tradition and modernity have been found in many settings to have an important bearing on activities in the population field. These are often questions which require the passage of time to be fully resolved. But much can be achieved through effective IEC and other population strategies.

24. Changes in institutional arrangements, to better facilitate the implementation of the Programme of Action, are important, especially in the public sector. However, the MCH/FP approach is much simpler than the more complex and multisectoral RH/FP strategy, and many countries are finding the transition to be a difficult one. New institutional arrangements call for new levels of cooperation and coordination. In this context sufficiently trained and experienced personnel, which tend to be in short supply even at the best of times, are now even more critical to success. In many countries this may be the single most important obstacle to more rapid progress.

25. The need for international resources remains high. Domestic financial resources are insufficient, and in many countries this has resulted in outright economic hardship, placing severe limits on the range and scope of activities. The lack of financial resources can also lead to a serious imbalance between resources spent on maintaining a pool of sufficiently trained and experienced personnel and resources spent on programme-related activities (see sect. III below on the flow of international resources for population activities).

B. Major groups and non-governmental organizations

26. An outstanding feature of both the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the International Conference on Population and Development was the strong and influential participation of non-governmental organizations. Some non-governmental organizations carry the major burden in the implementation of populatior policies. Many also began as either population or environment groups, but, in large measure due to the influence of the two conferences, have adopted each other's main focus to become population/environment non-governmental organizations.

27. It is probable that, since the conferences, there has been an increase in the number of non-governmental organizations in the fields of environment and development which also include population concerns in their activities. Baseline data are not available to determine the general extent of the increase. A total of 1,254 non-governmental organizations received accreditation from the United Nations to participate in the proceedings of the International Conference on Population and Development. Most of them dealt solely with population and health issues. Of the remainder, some 140, identified as concentrating on environment and development as well as population, were sent survey forms soliciting information for this report.

28. Twenty-four organizations responded. They included international, national, regional and local or community organizations from all major regions. The scope of their activities, membership, and objectives varied correspondingly. They included women's groups, youth groups, environmental groups, community groups and family planning groups. The responses shed some light on the range and level of non-governmental organization activities, on different approaches and on issues thought by the non-governmental organization community to be important in the field under consideration in this report.

29. Despite being involved in a wide variety of activities and coming from widely different parts of the world, all except one of the non-governmental organizations saw the provision of information and the development of public awareness as principal tasks.

30. Although they all acknowledged the importance of the population, environment and development linkages, more than three quarters maintained that awareness of those linkages in their respective countries was low. More unusual perhaps was the claim by more than half the respondents that awareness of the linkages among the non-governmental organizations themselves was low. In this regard a number of them emphasized the importance of strengthening the capacity of local and grass-roots organizations to take on awareness-creating and advocacy activities.

31. The majority of the non-governmental organizations surveyed confine their activities to their own country where they focus on national and local issues. The responses, however, indicated that there is increasing networking among them and a considerable amount of collaboration across national boundaries, involving international organizations and funding agencies. Thus, while many non-governmental organizations operate only on the local, regional or national scene, they appear to attract international attention and funding. All but five

respondents listed at least two partners or funding organizations. The partners included international organizations, including United Nations system organizations, national development agencies and institutions, international non-governmental organizations, and also state or local governments in the home country.

32. A number of non-governmental organizations are part of non-governmental organization networks or associated with an umbrella non-governmental organization. These relations are often important capacity-building instruments through the provision of training, exchange of institutional experience, information etc. By being associated with networks or umbrella organizations, smaller non-governmental organizations are also able to provide contributions to or exert influence on larger forums at the national and international levels.

33. The number of funding agencies providing support for non-governmental organization activities may be an indication of the increased importance placed on these organizations by bilateral and multilateral funding agencies. This may in part be due to the broad range of issues and activities covered by the non-governmental organizations. Technology transfer, provision of reproductive health services, capacity-building, income generation schemes, advocacy and literacy campaigns are a few examples of the activities undertaken by non-governmental organizations working in the population, environment, and development field.

34. According to the non-governmental organizations, the most important environment and development factors with links to population factors range from local to global in nature. Whatever their geographical scope, however, issues such as depletion of natural resources, declining food production, and declining availability and quality of water were linked with issues such as income generation, literacy, health care, unsustainable patterns of production and consumption in the developed world, privatization and the effects of structural adjustment programmes, international trade patterns, and the foreign debt burden.

35. As part of the process of integrating the contributions of major groups and non-governmental organizations into the implementation of the Programme of Action, UNFPA has established a non-governmental organization advisory committee. Drawing on the advice and experience of the committee has been important to the development of UNFPA's own strategies since the International Conference. The Advisory Committee addresses such issues as how non-governmental organizations can assist in monitoring the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national and international levels; how UNFPA can encourage Governments to expand their collaboration with non-governmental organizations; how UNFPA can best identify new national-level non-governmental organization partners, assess their capacity and draw on their expertise, both in service provision and advocacy work; how UNFPA can provide appropriate training and support to non-governmental organizations; and the need for UNFPA to revise its procedures to facilitate partnerships.

36. A number of concrete development issues have also been addressed in the dialogue between the advisory committee and UNFPA. These include gender and development, poverty alleviation, reproductive health, research, training and

advocacy. To these should be added sessions on the evolution of collaboration between UNFPA and non-governmental organizations, future directions for UNFPA programming etc.

III. FINANCE

37. Only a year and a half has passed since the International Conference on Population and Development, and it is therefore too early to evaluate domestic flows of resources for population policies and programmes. According to the Programme of Action, the developing countries themselves will, on average, provide about two thirds of the resources necessary. Although information is sparse, a reassessment of national priorities in favour of population programmes is under way in several countries. But the Programme of Action also makes clear that not all countries can be expected to provide from domestic sources as much as two thirds of the resources required.

38. The reports from the countries indicate that many are facing serious difficulties in financing their population programmes. In several countries economic difficulties have prevented Governments from allocating the necessary resources to population programmes. This, in turn, has had detrimental effects on provision of and access to services, frequently resulting in shortages of trained staff, supplies and materials needed in health facilities.

39. International flows of resources need to increase at least in amounts stipulated at the International Conference, in order to finance the population portion of the Programme of Action. Among donor countries, some have in fact pledged increased overall support for population activities, and some have already increased their funding.

40. More than 80 per cent of the multilateral funds for population policies is provided by UNFPA. Funding for UNFPA has increased since the International Conference. In 1995 UNFPA's income increased by 16 per cent over the 1994 figure. The UNFPA income target for 1996 is $325 million.

41. The principal sources of loans and credits for population purposes are the World Bank and, increasingly, the regional development banks. In 1993 the World Bank made available about $344 million for population purposes, the second largest amount since 1984. During the period 1990-1993, overall international assistance to the population field increased from $972 million to $1,310 million. Data on international flows for population assistance for 1994 and later years are not yet available.

42. Some progress would appear to have been made in the mobilization of financial resources. Additional resources, however, are urgently required in order better to identify and satisfy unmet needs in the population/development field.

IV. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

43. The recent efforts aimed a closer integration of population variables into the mainstream activities of United Nations system organizations have been inspired by both the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the International Conference on Population and Development, and they have taken essentially two avenues. The first has been to reorganize "population units" and place them at more advantageous functional locations within the overall institutional structures in question, sometimes as part of a general reorganization. The second has been to introduce population factors to a wider spectrum of environmental and developmental issues and programme areas.

44. As part of a general reorganization and closer integration of population concerns, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has created a Population Programme Service, regrouping the Technical Supports Services (TSS) specialists within a new Department of Sustainable Development. One of the tasks of the Population Programme Service is to provide advice to countries on the development of country programmes and projects in the population and environment sector.

45. A number of studies have also been carried out by the unit within FAO; inter alia, "Gender, environment and population in the Near East: major policy challenges for sustainable rural development", "Population and land degradation", and "Population and water resources". In order to improve developing planning in the areas affected, a study is under way on spontaneous migration to areas freed of river blindness.

46. The nature and the magnitude of environmental problems associated with refugees have grown more serious in recent years. Several factors contribute to the impact that refugees have on the environment around refugee camps. First, in many new emergencies the refugee populations are considerably larger than the local population of the immediately surrounding areas. Secondly, refugee populations are frequently located in environmentally sensitive areas, including the vicinity of national parks and other protected areas. And thirdly, refugees tend to stay in countries of asylum for longer periods.

47. In response to these developments and to various deficiencies of the environment-related projects it had carried out, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has undertaken a review of its activities in the environment field. The Interim Guidelines for Environment-sensitive Management of Refugee Programmes, introduced in July 1994, were revised after an internal Working Group on the Environment reviewed UNHCR's policies and practices. A basic purpose of the revisions was to make new guidelines conform with the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the spirit of Agenda 21. UNHCR has also introduced a number of new environmental initiatives in the field. They include environmental education and the participation of refugees and locals in environmental activities and field testing of new, emerging and more appropriate technologies in refugee camps.

48. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) has undertaken two main types of activities of relevance to chapter 5. The first consists of work carried out on the documentation and analysis of urbanization trends and

their varied impacts on the environment. The second includes statistical activities involving considerable amounts of demographic data. Much of this work will be incorporated in the global plan of action being drafted for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), to be held in Istanbul in June 1996. The Habitat publication Compendium of Human Settlements Statistics 1995 10/ contains 30 tables covering a wide range of topics such as population and its characteristics, economically active population by industry and occupation, land use, housing units etc. This is an important statistical publication in terms of creating awareness about demographic trends and sustainable human settlements development. The Centre also issues a number of other relevant studies and publications.

49. The United Nations Children's Fund's (UNICEF) follow-up to chapter 5 of Agenda 21 and now also of chapter III of the Programme of Action focuses on promoting the survival and development of children and women by strengthening programme support in four principal areas: girls' education; women's and girls' empowerment; primary health care, including reproductive health; and tracking child and maternal mortality. The activities in these areas are carried out through country programmes developed in cooperation with national Governments, usually in five-year cycles and implemented by national Governments and indigenous organizations. There is also collaboration with participating donors, non-governmental organizations and other United Nations agencies.

50. The Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat is involved in a number of ongoing activities which are part of the follow-up to Agenda 21 and the Programme of Action. They include contributions to the DPCSD coordinated programme of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development to develop indicators of sustainable development. The Division acts as secretariat for the Commission on Population and Development which is charged with the primary responsibility for reviewing the implementation of the Programme of Action. Several of the Division's activities in this regard also concern chapter 5 of Agenda 21 - for example, the preparation of the World Population Monitoring Report which in 1996 will focus on reproductive health.

51. Apart from those projects in the area of population, environment and development, which are implemented through country programmes, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) also funds a number of activities and projects undertaken by other members of the United Nations system (including FAO, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations University (UNU)) and by various types of non-governmental organizations, ranging from universities and research institutions to advocacy groups and organizations devoted to public information and awareness creation. The Fund also chaired the Inter-Agency Task Force on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. To meet the challenges of the Programme of Action in particular, the Fund has over the past year reviewed its practices and guidelines, including those that deal specifically with development and environment. It has also reviewed and revised, with the approval of the Executive Board, the formulas and rules on which are based decisions regarding levels of funding of country programmes.

52. The purpose of the Inter-Agency Task Force was to enhance collaboration among United Nations agencies in the implementation of the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development. To that end, the Task Force initially established five working groups, with a lead agency for each. The groups focus on: common data systems at the national level, with UNICEF as the lead; basic education, with UNESCO as the lead; women's empowerment, with UNIFEM as the lead; reproductive health, with WHO as the lead; and policy-related issues, with UNFPA as the lead. Four of the groups have produced guidelines for country-level inter-agency cooperation in their respective areas. With the ILO as lead agency, a working group on international migration was also established. In November 1995, having been given a more inclusive mandate, the Inter-Agency Task Force was renamed the ACC Task Force on Basic Social Services for All.

53. The most important undertaking by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) during the past year was the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development, held in November. The Conference formulated a regional action programme on the alleviation of poverty, with consequences for environmental sustainability. Desertification and land degradation are major environmental problems associated with rapid population growth in the ESCAP region. The Commission has created the Regional Network of Research and Training Centres on Desertification Control in Asia and the Pacific in order to assist the poor in arid and mountain areas. Studies of water management are being carried out in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). ESCAP has also accorded high priority to the collection and compilation of environmental statistics. Methodological handbooks are produced and seminars conducted on how to address environmental problems.

54. Shortly after the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) revised its earlier plans for the period 1992-1997. To facilitate the coordination and integration of programme implementation, sectors were grouped into theme clusters. One of the nine clusters, poverty alleviation through sustainable development, included the following sectors: agriculture and rural development; marine affairs (living resources); environment and development; human settlements; and population. The Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and the Environment held its first session in January 1996.

55. Within the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) system, the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) is responsible for implementing substantial parts of the Latin American and Caribbean population programme. CELADE, as a technical secretariat for the countries in the region, drew up the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action on Population and Development, adopted by ECLAC in April 1994. The Centre is structured around four functional or organizational areas, each with its own range of activities. It undertakes significant amounts of research, produces teaching material and courses, collects data and produces databases (inter alia, CD-ROM/ DOCPAL (Database of the Latin American Population Documentation System)), and conducts training in population and development. It also collaborates extensively with major groups and non-governmental organizations.

56. The efficacy of many of the recommendations of Agenda 21 and the Programme of Action was confirmed by the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women. The Summit reiterated many of the demographic goals of the Programme of Action, and the Conference reiterated the emphasis on reproductive health. The Beijing Platform for Action also emphasized the role of women in environmental management - something no previous document of its kind had ever done. It recommended that women be actively involved in environmental decision-making at all levels; that gender concerns and perspectives be integrated into policies and programmes for sustainable development; and that the impact on women of development and environmental policies be assessed at all levels.

57. At its third session, the Commission on Sustainable Development asked the Economic and Social Council to examine how to ensure synergy and cooperation between it and the Commission on Population and Development. 11/ At its substantive session of 1995 the Council pledged, in cooperation with the functional commissions, to "ensure a better division of labour among them and coordination among their multi-year programmes" and to "clarify the particular forms under which common themes should be considered by them". 12/

58. It also pledged to review the "mandates, composition and working methods of the functional commissions ..., as appropriate, based on the scope of work involved" 13/ and to adjust them accordingly.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

59. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the International Conference on Population and Development were major events with far-reaching implications. Both - the International Conference especially - fashioned new ways of approaching population questions and problems. The new, more inclusive and integrated approach of the International Conference quite clearly presents a challenge to many countries. But the countries that had not yet fully implemented the earlier and perhaps less demanding approach, are not the ones facing the greatest difficulties in changing to the new approach. Some countries may indeed find it less painful to adapt to the new approach precisely because they are not tied down to and firmly set in the ways of the old.

60. Both conferences also gave greater visibility to the population issue and therefore greater visibility to the links between population issues and development and environment issues. The extent to which the shift from one approach to the other will be successfully completed and the extent to which action on the critical linkages between population, environment and development will be taken will depend in no small measure on the financial resources made available, nationally and internationally.

Notes

1/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I. Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), resolution I, annex II.

2/ E/CN.17/1995/15, para. 15.

3/ Poverty and the Environment. Reconciling short-term needs with long-term sustainability goals (Nairobi, United Nations Environment Programme, 1995), p. 29.

4/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development ..., op cit., para 5.3.

5/ Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex, para. 3.14.

6/ Ibid., para. 6.3.

7/ Ibid., para. 13.1.

8/ Population Policies and Programmes: Determinants and Consequences in Eight Developing Countries (London, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and United Nations Population Fund, n.d.), p. iii.

9/ Report of the International Conference on Population and Development ..., op cit., para. 4.1.

10/ Nairobi, United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, 1995.

11/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, Supplement No. 12 (E/1995/32), para. 96.

12/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/50/3/Rev.1), chap. III, para. 22, I.C.

13/ Ibid.